

Appl. No. : 10/634,134
Filed : August 4, 2003

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments and the following remarks are responsive to the August 5, 2004 Office Action. Claims 1-7 and 9 remain as originally filed, and Claim 8 is amended. Thus, Claims 1-9 are presented for further consideration. Please enter the amendments and reconsider the claims in view of the following remarks.

Response to Objection to Claims 8 and 9

In the August 5, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner objects to Claims 8 and 9 because of an informality in Claim 8. Claim 9 depends from Claim 8.

As described herein, Applicants have amended Claim 8 by replacing the word "an" before "oxide cleaning solution" in Claim 8, line 9 with the word --the--. Applicants submit that Claims 8 and 9 are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the objection to Claims 8 and 9 and to pass these claims to allowance.

Response to Rejection of Claims 1 and 8 Under 35 U.S.C. § 101

In the August 5, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner rejects Claims 1 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as claiming the same invention as that of Claims 1 and 23, respectively, of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400.

Applicant submits that Claim 1 of the present application and Claim 1 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400 are not coextensive in scope, so they do not claim the same invention. For the Examiner's convenience, listed below are these two claims, side-by-side, with the different language highlighted as bold text:

Claim 1 of the present application:	Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400:
1. A method for plating a conductive layer in an integrated circuit formed on a substrate, comprising: immersing the substrate in a cleaning fluid; and transferring the substrate from the cleaning fluid to a separate plating fluid while keeping the substrate immersed in fluid.	1. A method for plating a conductive layer in an integrated circuit formed on a substrate, comprising: immersing the substrate in a cleaning fluid comprising a reducing agent which etches oxide from the conductive layer; and transferring the substrate from the cleaning fluid to a separate plating fluid while keeping the substrate immersed in fluid, wherein the conductive layer comprises aluminum, and the reducing agent comprises a dilute base.

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Because Claim 1 of U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400 includes limitations not found in Claim 1 of the present application, these two claims are not coextensive in scope. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 1 and pass Claim 1 to allowance.

Similarly, Applicant submits that Claim 8 of the present application and Claim 23 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400 are not coextensive in scope, so they do not claim the same invention. For the Examiner's convenience, listed below are these two claims, side-by-side, with the different language highlighted as bold text:

Claim 8 of the present application:	Claim 23 of U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400:
<p>8. A method for electroless plating a conductive polymer on a metal surface of a workpiece, comprising:</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">immersing the workpiece in a container holding a plurality of solutions, wherein each of said plurality of solutions is in contact with at least one other of said plurality of solutions, thereby allowing direct transfer of said workpiece between said plurality of solutions in said container;</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">exposing the metal surface to an oxide cleaning solution within the container;</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">preferentially forming a layer comprising a conducting monomer after exposing the metal surface to the oxide cleaning solution and prior to removing the workpiece from the container; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">polymerizing said conducting monomer layer.</p>	<p>23. A method for electroless plating a conductive polymer on a metal surface of a workpiece, the method comprising:</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">immersing the workpiece in a container holding a plurality of solutions, wherein each of said plurality of solutions is in contact with at least one other of said plurality of solutions, thereby allowing direct transfer of said workpiece between said plurality of solutions in said container, wherein the metal surface includes an aluminum oxide layer prior to immersing the workpiece;</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">exposing the metal surface to an oxide cleaning solution within the container;</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">preferentially forming a layer comprising a conducting monomer after exposing the metal surface to the oxide cleaning solution and prior to removing the workpiece from the container;</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">polymerizing said conducting monomer layer; and</p> <p style="padding-left: 2em;">selectively forming a hydrophobic upper surface over a non-metal material surrounding the metal surface prior to preferentially forming the layer comprising a conducting monomer.</p>

Because Claim 23 of U.S. Patent No. 6,630,400 includes limitations not found in Claim 8 of the present application, these two claims are not coextensive in scope. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of Claim 8 and pass Claim 8 to allowance.

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Response to Rejection of Claims 2-7 and 9

On the "Office Action Summary" page of the August 5, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner indicates that Claims 1-9 are rejected. However, in the August 5, 2004 Office Action, the Examiner does not cite any statutory support or provide any arguments regarding the rejection of Claims 2-7 and 9. Applicants submit that each of Claims 2-7 and 9 are patentable over the prior art. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of Claims 2-7 and 9 and to pass these claims to allowance. If the Examiner continues to reject these claims, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to provide detailed support, including citation of the statutes being asserted for support, for any such rejections.

Summary

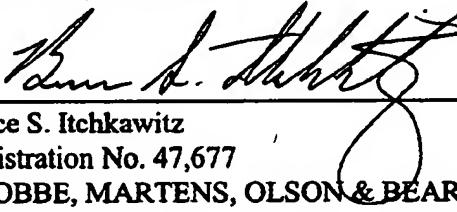
For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that Claims 1-9 are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request such action.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 10/26/04

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